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I. ACTION TAKEN BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE EXERCISE OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

On 14 January 1991 in a letter addressed to the Secretary-General (A/45/925-S/22073), the Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People stated the following:

"In my capacity as Chairman of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I would like to draw your most urgent attention to the growing dangers faced by the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, at this time of heightened tension in the region and to express the Committee's apprehension and deep concern at the possible tragic repercussions of a war in the Gulf for their safety and protection.

"In an urgent appeal for the protection of Palestinians dated 11 January 1991, the Palestinian Human Rights Information Centre of the Arab Studies Society at Jerusalem has stated that there are indications that a mass transfer of Palestinians could be carried out in the event of war. The newspaper Hadashot of 10 January 1991 was reported to have disclosed that, according to information leaked by settler circles to the Peace Now movement, settlers serving in military reserve units in the West Bank are planning a 'mass evacuation ' of Palestinians if war breaks out. A former head of Israeli military intelligence, writing in The Jerusalem Post of 8 January 1991, was reported to have pointed out that in a war situation Israel could be expected to lift all moral and legal restraints on the Israeli Defence Forces in the occupied territory and that this could very likely result in a new mass exodus of Palestinians to the east.

"The New York Times reported on 14 January 1991 that prominent Palestinian physicians at Jerusalem in a press conference stressed the inadequacy and unpreparedness of the medical system in the occupied territories for treating victims of war. Their overriding concern, however, was that a state of chaos would be used as a cover by Israel to carry out mass killings and forcible transfer of Palestinians while international attention was focused elsewhere. The paper also reported that it was expected that in the event of war the occupied territories would be immediately placed under full curfew, thus denying access to journalists and human rights observers.

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"The Palestinians' deep sense of vulnerability and fear for the future is further aggravated by the dramatic deterioration of the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory in recent weeks, as shown by the rapid increase in Palestinian casualties and the recent deportation by Israel of four activists from the Gaza Strip in total disregard for the relevant Security Council resolutions.

"The experience of previous wars in the region and since the beginning of the intifadah shows in no uncertain terms that Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory face a real threat, which must be urgently and firmly addressed by the Security Council and by the international community as a whole. On behalf of the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, I appeal urgently to you and to all concerned to take immediately all necessary action to ensure the safety and protection of Palestinians in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, in all circumstances."

II. SECURITY COUNCIL EXPRESSES DEEP CONCERN ABOUT RECENT VIOLENCE IN GAZA, ESPECIALLY ISRAELI SECURITY FORCES' ACTIONS AGAINST PALESTINIANS

At the 2973rd meeting of the Security Council, on 4 January 1991, on the situation in the occupied Arab territories, the Council President, Bagbeni Adeito Nzengeya (Zaire) delivered the following statement on behalf of Council members:

"The members of the Security Council are deeply concerned about recent acts of violence in Gaza, especially actions by Israeli security forces against Palestinians, which led to scores of casualties among those civilians.

"The members of the Council deplore those actions, particularly the shooting of civilians. They reaffirm the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 to all the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including Jerusalem, and the request that Israel, the occupying Power, fully comply with the provisions of the Convention.

"The members of the Council reaffirm their positions, most recently expressed in Security Council resolution 681 (1990), and support the work of the Secretary-General in implementing the said resolution. The members of the Council further urge intensified efforts by all who can contribute to reducing the conflict and tension in order to achieve peace in the area." (See SC/5254)

III. SECRETARY-GENERAL DEPLORES EXPULSION OF PALESTINIANS FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES AND CALLS ON ISRAEL TO PERMIT THOSE DEPORTED TO RETURN HOME

The following statement, attributable to the spokesman for the Secretary-General, was issued on 8 January 1991 (see SG/SM/4534):

> "The Secretary-General is deeply concerned by the fact that Israel today carried out its decision to expel four Palestinians from the occupied territories. The Secretary-General strongly deplores this action, which is in direct contravention of the Fourth Geneva Convention. He calls on the Israeli authorities to permit those who have been deported to return to their homes. It will be recalled that this matter was addressed in Security Council resolution 681 (1990)."

IV. UNRWA EXPRESSES REGRET AT EXPULSION OF FOUR PALESTINIANS FROM OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORIES

The following press release was issued by UNRWA on 10 January 1991:

"Commissioner-General Giorgio Giacomelli of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) today expressed his deep regret that Israel carried out on 8 January the expulsion of four Palestinians from the occupied territory.

"The deportations were carried out after lawyers for the defendants dropped their appeal on the grounds that they were not given enough information about the charges. The four men were then taken by Israeli army helicopter to southern Lebanon.

"Mr. Giacomelli said the expulsions were not only in violation of international conventions but could also result in a heightening of tensions in the region." (see PAL/1750)

V. UNRWA EXPRESSES CONCERN ABOUT INSUFFICIENT PROTECTIVE MEASURES FOR PALESTINIANS IN OCCUPIED TERRITORY

The following press release was issued by UNRWA on 22 January 1991:

"The Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), Giorgio Giacomelli, has expressed concern to the Israeli Government that sufficient measures have not been taken to protect the Palestinian inhabitants of the occupied territory against the possibility of a chemical weapons attack.

"Mr. Giacomelli noted in Vienna today that the Israeli authorities have not taken the same steps to protect the more than 1.5 million Palestinians in the occupied territory of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, for whose welfare they are responsible, as they have for the Israeli population as a whole. 'Such steps would include the distribution of masks and other protective gear against chemical attacks, as well as the installation of adequate warning devices, such as air raid sirens', Mr. Giacomelli said.

"The Commissioner-General observed that UNRWA has repeatedly approached the Israeli authorities on this matter in recent months and received assurances that gas masks and protective gear would be distributed to the Palestinian population at large. However, to date, only those in Jerusalem and a fraction of the population of the West Bank have received masks.

"In a separate statement, the Commissioner-General said UNRWA wished to draw the attention of the international community, and especially the signatories to the Fourth Geneva Convention, to the urgent need to address this matter and find an immediate and satisfactory solution.

"Mr. Giacomelli reiterated his concern in a meeting today with Israel's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Vienna.

"<u>UNRWA Receives Gas-Mask Kits from Sweden</u>

"While calling for the issuance of protective gear for the entire Palestinian population in the occupied territory,

UNRWA has approached several Governments for assistance in supplying gas masks for essential personnel.

"The first response has come from the Swedish Government, which has provided 25,000 gas-mask kits. These are to be distributed selectively by UNRWA, starting with personnel in public and health services, including hospital and clinic staff, in the West Bank and Gaza.

"Mr. Giacomelli expressed his great appreciation to the Swedish Government for its prompt and generous response to the Agency's appeal." (see PAL/1751)

VI. UNRWA PLANS FOOD DISTRIBUTION TO WEST BANK AND GAZA TO ALLEVIATE HARDSHIPS FROM CURFEWS

The following press release was issued by UNRWA on 31 January 1991:

"In response to strictly enforced curfews imposed by the Israeli authorities on the Palestinian population of the occupied Gaza Strip and West Bank since the outbreak of the Gulf war, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) has begun implementing a programme of emergency food distribution to alleviate shortages and hardships being experienced by refugees and non-refugees alike.

"Implementation of the plan came as UNRWA expressed renewed concern at the severe economic and personal hardships being experienced by Palestinians as a consequence of the Gulf war.

"The entire Gaza Strip and West Bank (except for East Jerusalem) were placed under a blanket curfew early on 16 January. This meant that no one was permitted to leave home except during selective liftings of the curfews when women were allowed out to purchase foodstuffs from makeshift or mobile markets. The entire working population of the occupied territory -- estimated at more than 280,000 people -- has been deprived of the opportunity to earn an income during this two-week period. The UNRWA has received reports that both food stocks and cash supplies are running low in most homes.

"Another consequence is that schools in the West Bank and Gaza have been closed indefinitely and Palestinian

children are once again being deprived of an education. Curfews have been eased in a few areas of the Gaza Strip in recent days, but in all other areas they remain in effect, and harsh punishments are being applied against curfew breakers.

"The UNRWA has appealed to a number of its traditional major donors for special contributions to alleviate food shortages faced by the Palestinian population in the occupied territory. Funding is being sought to purchase sufficient quantities of foodstuffs containing a minimum of 1,000 calories a day for each needy person over a three-month period, to be distributed to some 295,000 Palestinian families in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"The UNRWA has already started a partial distribution in Gaza and the West Bank, and further distributions will be carried out as commodities become available.

"<u>UNRWA Calls for Lifting of Curfews</u>

"In a statement, UNRWA's Commissioner-General, Giorgio Giacomelli, called on the Israeli authorities to lift curfews in the occupied territory as a humanitarian measure.

"'Palestinians should he allowed to resume, to the extent possible, their normal daily lives', Mr. Giacomelli said. 'Workers should be permitted to go back to their jobs and farmers to their fields so that they may once again start earning incomes to support their families."

"He added: 'As an international humanitarian organization, UNRWA feels that these curfews -- which were imposed not in response to any specific security-related incident -- are an unnecessary burden on Palestinians who are already suffering greatly from the effects of the Gulf war in the form of lost jobs and income from the Gulf States.'

"'The UNRWA will do what it can to alleviate hardship, but the ultimate responsibility must lie with the Israeli authorities to restore daily life to as near to normal as can be expected under the tense and difficult circumstances prevailing in the area,' Mr. Giacomelli said.

"<u>Gas Masks</u>

"Meanwhile, UNRWA has expressed its appreciation to the Swedish, Norwegian, Canadian and Finnish Governments for

providing gas-mask kits to the Agency for distribution to UNRWA staff and others in the Palestinian community in Gaza and the West Bank.

"Altogether, about 52,000 gas-mask kits have been or are to be made available to UNRWA by those Governments after the Agency's appeal for Palestinians to be given the same protection as Israel is providing to its own citizens against a possible chemical-weapons attack.

"The donated gas-mask kits are being distributed to UNRWA local staff and their dependents, to key workers in local public and health services and to West Bank residents living in places considered to be most at risk."
(See PAL/1752)

VII. DECLARATION ON THE MIDDLE EAST ISSUED BY THE TWELVE STATES MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AT THE MEETING OF THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL, HELD IN ROME ON 14 AND 15 DECEMBER 1990

1. The European Council expresses its dismay at the continuing lack of clear prospects for a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to the Palestinian problem, and at the renewed acts of terrorism and violence. It expresses its deep concern at the rising incomprehension and tension in the occupied territories. It renews its call to the parties concerned to refrain from violence that can only engender new violence. It expresses its concern about the Israeli practices of collective reprisals, such as the destruction of houses or restrictions on freedom of movement, and deplores the recent decision to place moderate Palestinians under administrative arrest.

The European Council calls once again upon Israel to comply with resolutions 672 (1990) and 673 (1990) of the United Nations Security Council, to act in conformity with its obligations under the Fourth Geneva Convention on the protection of the Civilian Population, and to co-operate with the United Nations. It welcomes the recommendations by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in this regard and fully supports every effort of the United Nations Security Council to achieve a better protection of the Palestinian population and to promote peace in the area. It reaffirms the determination of the European Community and its member States to further assist the Palestinian population in its serious plight.

2. The European Council reiterates its long-standing commitment to a just and lasting solution to these problems, in conformity with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations

Security Council and with the principles expressed by the European Community in its previous declarations. To this end, the European Council reaffirms its support for the principle of convening, at an appropriate time, an international peace conference, under the auspices of the United Nations.

3. The serious deterioration in the economic situation in the occupied territories is a source of great concern to the Community. In this connection, the European Council reaffirms its commitment to the economic and social development of Palestinian people and considers that, in the new circumstances, the doubling of Community aid to the occupied territories decided by the Strasbourg European Council appears particularly appropriate and timely.

The European Council also considers it vital for all efforts to be made to create the conditions for facilitating and increasing trade between the occupied territories and the Community.

4. As expressed in its Declaration of 28 October 1990, the European Council remains convinced that relations of mutual confidence and co-operation must be encouraged among the countries of the region, with a view to establishing a situation of stability, security, economic and social well-being, and respect of civil and political rights, to forestalling the recurrence of crises, and to preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The European Community and its member States remain ready actively to co-operate with the concerned countries to achieve these goals and to contribute to the success of the task entrusted by relevant resolutions to the Secretary-General of the United Nations to examine measures to enhance security and stability in the region. In this connection, the European Council reaffirms the importance of a meaningful and constructive Euro-Arab dialogue. (See A/45/888-S/22018, annex II)

VIII. EXCERPT FROM THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION OF THE SUPREME COUNCIL OF THE STATES MEMBERS OF THE GULF CO-OPERATION COUNCIL, HELD AT DOHA, QATAR, FROM 22 TO 25 DECEMBER 1990

"The Supreme Council reviewed developments with regard to the question of Palestine and expressed its concern at the negative impact on the Palestinian cause of the Iraqi aggression against the State of Kuwait. The Council recalls its previous resolutions and declarations on the issue and reiterates its commendation of the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people in its valiant intifadah against the authorities of the iniquitous occupation and their regressive and arbitrary practices. Affirming the full support of its member States and their unconditional backing for the historic intifadah of the Palestinian people, the Council urges the international community to provide every kind of support and assistance to the intifadah and to the people of the occupied territory in their ordeal and to endeavour to expose terroristic Israeli methods, and the occupation and its tyranny and bring a halt to such arbitrary measures as the expulsion of Palestinians and the demolition of their homes, which are incompatible with the principles of human rights and in breach of international law and international covenants.

"The Council welcomes the adoption of Security Council resolution 681 (1990) on the provision of international protection to the Palestinians in the occupied territories and the Security Council's call for the convening of an international peace conference on the question of Palestine. The Supreme Council reaffirms its support for the convening of the conference with the participation of all the parties concerned, including the State of Palestine, and calls for the necessary measures to be taken for its realization." (see A/45/908, p. 7)

IX. INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS APPEALS FOR RESPECT FOR CIVILIANS IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

The following press release was issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on 8 January 1991:

"The State of Israel expelled four citizens from the Gaza Strip on 8 January 1991, thus resuming a course of action it had discontinued in May 1989.

"The expulsions bring to 66 the total number of persons expelled from the occupied territories since the beginning of the intifadah. They constitute a grave breach of article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, which prohibits the forced transfer of civilians outside an outside territory for any reason whatsoever.

"This move takes place in a climate of violence fomented by the growing number of civilian victims since September 1990. During the past four months over 50 people have been killed and several thousand wounded in Israel and the occupied territories, an escalation attributable to the increasingly widespread use of live ammunition against civilians and the frequency of indiscriminate attacks with knives and explosives.

"The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) asks that everything possible be done to put an end to the spiral of violence and repression, and that the population of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip be treated in accordance with the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention."

X. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

In the course of January, the following information was received by the Division for Palestinian Rights:

1. International Association of Democratic Lawyers, report of mission to the occupied territories of the West Bank and Gaza, from 11 to 16 December 1990. Available from: 263, Avenue Albert, 1180, Brussels, Belgium.

2. Tanmiya, quarterly publication issued by the Welfare Association, a philanthropic foundation established in 1983 and registered at Geneva. The newsletter is designed to provide information on developments in Palestinian education, health, economic affairs and culture. Available from: 7, avenue Pictet de Rochemont, P.O. Box 602, CH-1211, Geneva 6, Switzerland.

3. Jerusalem, publication of Palestine Committee for NGOs. Available from: B.P. 554, Tunis Cedex 1080, Tunis, Tunisia.

4. Scottish Trades Union Congress, a resolution dealing with the situation in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip adopted at the 1990 Congress is available from: Middleton House, 16 Woodlands Terrace, Glasgow G36DF, United Kingdom.

5. Israel and Palestine Political Report, available from: Magelan, 5 rue Cardinal Mercier 75009, Paris, France.

6. The Jerusalem Fund for Education and Community Development. Information available from: 2435, Virginia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037, United States of America.

7. Israeli Mirror, monthly publication covering information from the mainstream Israeli press. Available from: 21, Collingham Road, London SW5 ONV, United Kingdom.

8. Oriente Medio, publication edited by Asociación Amigos de Palestina. Available from: Apdo. N. 2102, 37080, Salamanca, Spain.

9. Middle East Report, available from: Dept. A, Suite 119, 1500 Mass. Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, United States of America.

10. The Other Front, available from: the Alternative Information Center, P.O. Box 24278, Jerusalem.

11. Palestine Focus, national newspaper of the Palestine Solidarity Committee. Available from: P.O. Box 27462, San Francisco, CA 94127, United States of America.

12. AJME News, journal of Americans for Justice in the Middle East, available from: P.O. Box 113-5581, Beirut, Lebanon.

13. Palestine, fortnightly supplement of Falestine Al-Thawra, available from: 13, Botsari Street, Nicosia, Cyprus.

14. The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, monthly publication available from: P.O. Box 53062, Washington, D.C. 20009, United States of America.

15, Middle East International, bi-weekly publication, available from: 21, Collingham Road, London SW5 ONV or, P.O. Box 53365, Temple Heights Station, Washington, D.C. 20009, United States of America.

16. International Co-ordinating Committee for NGOs on the Question of Palestine, statement to UNRWA of 21 January 1991. Available from: 150, route de Ferney, Case postale 2100, CH 1211, Geneva 2, Switzerland.

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